



FRIENDS OF WHITE OAK MINUTES

January 13, 2021 at 7pm - ONLINE MEETING

PRESENT: June, Rob, Barry, Dave, Elisse, Kim, Ken, Daniel, Shana, Joe, Bruce, and Rachael. Chris, Fatmata, Shane, and Rachael were absent.

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Minutes from December 20, 2020 were approved via Email.
- 3) Guest Speaker – County Council President Tom Hucker
 - a. Tom gave an overview, COVID-19 difficulties, passed same services budget, food, business, and rental assistance, \$200M from Feds for COVID-19 relief, State Government has been disappointing, lobbying Governor to release some of the Rainy-Day Fund, Grants given out to local businesses, passed the new Growth Policy to help invigorate the building industry, and working on some climate protection bills.
 - b. Rachael asked about the status of COVID-19 vaccines for East County? Tom noted the County is all the same, but the State calls the shots on vaccines. Phase 1A is for first responders, then 2 is staff and patients in nursing homes, 1b is nurses and teachers, 1c and 1d for those over 75, and then over 65, and then under 65.
 - c. Dave noted transit systems struggling as well as parking systems and revenues. What is the County thinking in terms of assistance? Tom was appointed by Marc Elrich on the WMATA committee for surrounding districts. Metro received a Federal infusion to help. Getting money for County Ride On as well. Cares Act from March helped with \$31M to help Ride On.
 - d. Ken asked with all the reduction and funding, how will that affect building projects such as the Burnt Mills School? Tom responded the Capital Budget is planned 6 years at a time and is more durable than one would think. The Council is prioritizing the shovel ready projects so the County will be ready.
 - e. Kim inquired about housing initiative, roads, retail, schools, and transit? Tom noted each master plan provides details for each community. Heard from development community they were held back on projects because of impact taxes. So, if development does not happen, then tax revenues fall. The long-term plan with the new Growth Policy is to ease the immediate hit from impact taxes making it easier for developers to move forward.
 - f. Shana mentioned the long-term disinvestment in the East County and White Oak area. She sees Tom's one year term as Council President as an opportunity to advance the East County and specifically White Oak. How do you intend to spend your time to promote us? Tom fully agreed. County has made a lot of investments in East County such as the new Flash BRT. Tom then asked Brian (White Oak Shopping Center) and Jonathan (Viva White Oak) on wanting to know what is happening with their properties? Brian responded the White Oak Shopping

Center depends upon Sears and their ability to control their long-term lease. Tom asked Brian if there are plans by Saul to break up the property and phase redevelopment? Brian said no because Sears has too much control over the main routes within the Center. Jonathan gave an update on Viva. Thanks to many on this meeting for supporting the change in impact taxes and the new Growth Policy. He is talking to investors for 2021. Percontee/Global Life Sciences paid off the \$10M note to the County early by 3 years.

- g. Dave said the FOWO will be incorporating and it is on the agenda tonight. The County is looking at the CHI Center for an adaptive plan. FOWO has an ambitious Farmers Market plan and hope to be on the Dow Jones site. Also looking at a food truck night as an interim event and installing banners on MD650 and MD29. Elisse mentioned the tour of CHI with Marc Elrich.
- h. June mentioned transportation issues for White Oak specifically there are no options to get to community center. She noted various gaps in the system as well and suggested a circulator bus. The response June has gotten is the issue with no room to turnaround a bus. A micro bus would suffice in lieu of a full-size bus.

4) Updates from Pete

- a. Pete applied for a Farmers Market Sponsorship which is a County funded program. June noted there is a market at the Kaiser complex.
- b. The County Attorney's Office is drafting the language for the bill that would create the White Oak Advisory Committee. It will be sent to the County Council for approval.

5) Updates from Lt. Cole

- a. Muffler pollution bill in Annapolis
 - i. Enforcement efforts – County Police determined four “meet up” attempts with over 400 cars in Burtonsville. The Police had success with deterring the event. They are working closely with the Police from Howard and Prince Georges Counties. Bruce noted they have a new budget for physical barriers to block off access. Bruce is now in charge of traffic funds for DUI and aggressive driving on weekends. There were 201 DUI arrests during holidays thanks to State grant money.
 - ii. Daytime activity includes traffic officers at MD29 and MD650 as well as the Enclave Apartment Community for speeding. Officers continue to meet with the management of the Enclave. Door alarms, new alarms, and search warrants issued have decreased crime.
 - iii. As for Covid-19 vaccines they are ongoing. Fire and rescue members are getting vaccines and now police officers have access to shots this week. Bruce received his shot this morning.
 - iv. June brought up the officer who was struck by a vehicle. Bruce responded the incident was due to a stolen vehicle and the officer was struck by a passing car.
 - v. Pedestrian safety is part of their ongoing program such as going after drivers who do not yield to pedestrians.

6) From the Board

- a. Board Member Assignments/Subcommittee Progress
 - i. June is working on the Community Aesthetics and Political Outreach/Engagement subcommittees. She noted it is difficult due to COVID-19 with outreach. The groups are working with condo associations, HOAs. June suggested a brochure. Security alerts from Police are helpful.

- ii. Rob is working on the CHI Center – he talked to Daphne Pollozzi at CHI. Their two main issues are COVID-19 and funds to keep afloat.
- b. General Comments
 - i. Bruce mentioned the trailers and trash at White Oak Shopping Center. Brian said he would follow up with center management.
 - ii. Shana noted the commercial trucks on Powder Mill Road at 650. Residentially zoned. State road. Bruce will investigate.
 - iii. Barry reiterated to Brian the dumping problem at Sears.
 - iv. Shana asked Brian if Saul Centers was looking into new tenant should Sears fail? Brain could not comment on lease details, but there will probably be terms to terminate the lease. Saul thinks about alternatives all the time, but not specifically for White Oak Center Sears. Dave commented on the low appliance inventory at the store and issues he has had with shopping at Sears.
- c. Farmers' Market
 - i. Dave met today with Daniel, Rachael, Elisse, and Pete. Looks like Dow Jones may workout. He has been talking to other managers of farmers' market. Farm Fresh is doing an aerial of the Dow Jones. Will not be inexpensive to do a great market. Bethesda spends \$100K a year on marketing. FOWO will have opportunities with vendor fees and business support. Pete commented on how real the market will be and not a pie in the sky idea.
- d. Incorporation Process
 - i. Dave signed the contract with Maryland Nonprofits to assist with preparation of Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Maryland incorporation, MANO recommended changes to language to align with requirements by the State of Maryland. A motion was made by Dave and was approved unanimously. Elisse and Dave contributed to the startup costs to be paid to MANO (\$1200), incorporation (\$226), and IRS 1023 application (\$400). Motion by Dave to submit the incorporation documents. Kim asked to confirm the cost to the IRS, and it was confirmed to be \$400. Pete will donate the \$400 fee for the IRS application. Kim will donate the State registration fee. Kim motioned and Barry seconded. Motion approved.
- e. Dave addressed the 2021 Fundraising Strategy – corporate sponsors, bank account choices. Kim suggested using a black owned bank for the FOWO account. June said to ask FDA and Kaiser. Shana said to ask Coca-Cola. Dave indicated Blue Cross Blue Shield would like to help.
- f. Banners for White Oak Thoroughfares – Dave has two companies who have expressed interest. Where locate the banners – MD650 and MD29? June requested a group meeting for each subcommittee. Lockwood is important to include in the banner program. Lampposts are already on Lockwood and would be nice for banners.

7) From the Public – Opportunity to Bring up a Topic Not on the Agenda

- a. No comments

8) Adjourn